



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Contact: Mayor's Office of Communications, 415-554-6131

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**MAYOR LONDON N. BREED, DEPARTMENT OF CHILD
SUPPORT SERVICES, SAN FRANCISCO FIREFIGHTERS
LOCAL 798 & THE PUBLIC LIBRARY HOST ANNUAL
CHILDREN'S TOY & BOOK FESTIVAL AT CITY HALL**

San Francisco, CA— Mayor London N. Breed, San Francisco Firefighters Local 798, the Department of Child Support Services (SFDCSS), and the San Francisco Public Library today hosted the annual Children's Toy & Book Festival at City Hall. What began as a gesture of holiday cheer for SFDCSS program customers 15 years ago has now grown to support more than 1,200 children during the holiday season.

The Festival provided gifts, books, and interactive activities for children 12 and under, as well the opportunity to meet Santa Claus and Clifford the Big Red Dog. Children are invited through San Francisco's public schools, community-based organizations, and SFDCSS offices. Participating schools this year included Gordon Lau Elementary, Wu Yee Children's Services, RISE Institute, Jean Parker Elementary, Dr. George Washington Carver Elementary, Bessie Carmichael Elementary, and Dr. Charles Drew Elementary. Important information regarding City services and community resources was also available for parents, guardians, and teachers.

"The holiday season is about giving back to less fortunate, and as someone who grew up in poverty I understand how important this program is to kids in San Francisco," said Mayor Breed. "I want to thank the Firefighters, the Department of Child Support Services and the Public Library for their continuing commitment to give back to the community."

The San Francisco Firefighters Toy Program, run by the San Francisco Firefighters Local 798, is the City's largest and the nation's oldest program of its kind. Since 1949, it has evolved from a few firefighters repairing broken toys and bikes for 15 families to over 300 firefighters and friends volunteering their time to distribute toys throughout the year.

"Since 1949, the San Francisco Firefighters Toy Program has grown into the largest program of its type in the country," said Tom O'Connor, President of San Francisco Firefighters Local 798. "This year, we are proud to partner with Mayor Breed, the Department of Child Support Services, and the San Francisco Public Library at the Children's Toy & Book Festival to help bring joy and support to local children in need."



“We look forward to this event all year,” said Karen M. Roye, Director of the Department of Child Support Services. “Nothing compares to bringing joy to children during the holiday season.”

“This annual event spreads the joy of reading and helps families build their own home libraries,” said Acting City Librarian Michael Lambert. “We love to see the faces of the children as they pick out their very own books to keep.”

Residents interested in helping children through the program can make a donation to the Firefighters Toy Program by calling 415-777-0440 or by visiting www.sffirefightertoys.org.

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